

Charleston District Office

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Serving Georgetown and Horry  
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# Congressman Tim Scott

South Carolina First Congressional District

## How Can I Get Help Resolving a VA Issue?

As with all other inquiries to federal agencies, the Federal Privacy Act requires that the constituent provide to me a written, signed privacy authorization detailing what you are requesting that agency to provide to me. If you have access to the Internet, you can find a form for this purpose on my website at [www.timscott.house.gov](http://www.timscott.house.gov) and click on Serving You, then select Help with Federal Agencies. If you do not have access to the Internet, we can mail one to you or you can pick one up at either of my District Offices shown above.

### Inquiry Process

My office receives more requests for assistance with veterans' disabilities issues than any other. There are numerous other benefits of veterans and dependents for which we receive requests for assistance. For many of those, the issue might be resolved in relatively short order through an inquiry, usually six to eight weeks. Disabilities claims, on the other hand, take from three to six months for the VA Regional Office to work the development of the issues and to decide whether to grant or deny the claim. The process that is established by Congress and the federal courts is very complex and legally demanding, which is a big reason for the slowness. The other reason is the incredibly large number of claims. The laws governing veterans' disabilities require each disability claimed by a veteran to be considered separately and individually with ratings, if granted, ranging from zero percent to one hundred percent. However, the total percentage assigned to multiple disabilities to not necessarily the sum of the individual ratings. VA raters have tables and guidebooks developed over many years that lay out in minute detail the rates assigned to every conceivable illness or injury. Almost nothing is subjective. When a case is appealed to the Board of Veterans' Appeals and U. S. Court of Veterans' Appeals, if a rater/rating board errs in the process or the interpretation of evidence, or if they determine the case is in need of further development of certain issues, it is remanded to the Regional Office or Appeals Management Center for further development or reconsideration, with those issues/instructions spelled out in great detail. If, after the required additional development and reconsideration, the lower deciding authority still denies the claim, it is returned to the Board or Court for a decision to approve or deny. My involvement is limited to inquiry about the case, not direct involvement in the process. I can make a status inquiry at any stage of the process.